

The SOUTHEAST NEWS

OF, BY AND FOR CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Volume 2 - Number 4

JANUARY, 1954

Happy New Year

Would you like to be happy every one of those 525,000 minutes of 1954? Then set worthy goals for yourself, and strive earnestly to reach them.

When sought for its own sake, happiness is illusive. It is a by-product of helpfulness to others. Even if overtaken, it must be shared to become real.

Happiness follows sacrifice and comes from unexpected sources. Both joy and sorrow are dependent on the manner in which we meet the events of life, rather than the events themselves.

Happiness may be renewed at will by the memory of pleasant experiences. To find happiness with friends, praise all that is good and avoid criticism. Happiness comes from service to God and our fellow-man. It requires the ability to enjoy the present, without worrying about the future.

Christian stewardship which recognizes partnership with God in the use of all possessions, including time, talents, influence and life itself is one of the surest pathways to happiness, for it brings not only a joyful appreciation of the day's activities, but peaceful sleep and refreshment at night.

When we come to realize that we are but custodians of that which has been entrusted to our care, life takes on new meaning, and initiative is provided for great achievement.

"Happy is that people whose God is the Lord." (Ps. 144:15)

So HAPPY NEW YEAR to all fellow Christians everywhere!

—Robert Cashman, Moderator

Congregational Christian Churches

Dedication of Lanett Church

Climaxing about three years of planning and working, the Lanett Congregational Christian Church moved into the new building on November 22. A month of dedication had been declared by the pastor, the Rev. Joe A. French, and a week of services began on November 22 with a dedication to Christian Worship and Serving and a processional from the old to the new church.

Services were then held each evening, with many prominent laymen and ministers participating. Among them were Dr. Thomas A. Tripp, Director of the Town and Country Department of the Congregational Christian Churches in New York City, who spoke on November 24. Superintendent Erston M. Butterfield preached on the evening of November 27 and again on the morning of November 29. The Rev. C. Carl Dollar, Director of the Christian Rural Extension Service, also preached one evening.

The outline of the services follows: Nov. 22, evening service, Dedication to Worshipful Music; Nov. 23, Dedication to Churchmanship; Nov. 24, Dedication to Christian Workmanship (with all who helped build the church as special guests); Nov. 25, Dedication to Christian Teaching (recognition of officers); Nov. 26, Thanksgiving For All Blessings; Nov. 27, Dedication to Missions and Evangelism; Nov. 29, morning service, Dedication Through Holy Communion; evening service, Dedication to Christian Fellowship.

On December 6 the church began a program of Visitation Evangelism, designed to unite efforts in promoting a great spiritual advance for the church. The Sunday School is being reorganized to make it more effective, and all boards and organizations of the church are busily making plans for progress and service in the coming year.

The Annual Meeting of the Southeast Convention will be held in this new church May 15-16, 1954.



The Rev. and Mrs. Joe A. French with the Rev. Carl Dollar admiring the altar of the new church.

David McKeith, Jr., Resigns

Dr. Ronald Bridges, President of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, announced December 12 that Dr. David McKeith, Jr. had, for health reasons, tendered his resignation as Executive Vice-President of the American Board.

The resignation of Dr. McKeith was presented at a meeting of the Prudential Committee recently concluded and the resignation was accepted with deep regret by the Committee.

Dr. McKeith served parishes in Chicago, Illinois, and Hartford, Connecticut, before coming to the American Board in 1948. Mr. Harold B. Belcher, the Treasurer of the American Board, has been designated to act in place of the Executive Vice-President pending the filling of the vacancy.

Dr. McKeith was to have been a speaker at the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Convention next May. Announcement of another speaker will be made at a later date.

February Mission Institutes

Miss Ione Catton, Program Secretary in Missionary Education for the Mission Council, will direct a series of Mission Institutes in the Southeast Convention during February.

Topics for discussion will be: "What is the Foreign and Home Board Organization?", "The Status of World Missions Today", and "A Local Church Program of Missionary Education."

These institutes are being sponsored by the Convention Committee on Evangelism, Stewardship, and Missionary Education, of which the Rev. Joe A. French is Chairman.

Dates and Location of Institutes

- Feb. 1 - Pilgrim Church, Corbin, Ky.
- Feb. 2 - Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga, Tenn.
- Feb. 3 - Central Church, Atlanta, Ga. (noon)
- Feb. 4 - Fredonia Church, Barnesville, Ga.
- Feb. 5 - Vanceville Church, Tifton, Ga.
- Feb. 6 - Day of rest.
- Feb. 7 - Antioch Church, Andalusia, Ala.
- Feb. 9 - Ministers Meeting, Wadley, Ala.
- Feb. 10 - Langdale Church, Langdale, Ala.
- Feb. 11 - Lowell Church, Roanoke, Ala.
- Feb. 12 - Pilgrim Church, Birmingham, Ala.
- Feb. 13 - Day of rest.
- Feb. 14 - Friendship Church, Trnity, Ala.

Every church in the Southeast Convention is urged to send two or more representatives to the nearest institute. The entertaining church will provide the evening meal and visitors will make a voluntary offering to pay for their food.

The usefulness and success of the six session study course designed for leaders of local church mission study groups is attested by the fact that this course by Miss Ione Catton, "Your Church and the World Task" is now being used by 1100 churches. Copies may be obtained from the Convention office.

THE ATLANTA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FOUNDATION

A number of years ago, our denomination maintained a Seminary in Atlanta for the training of ministers of our area. During the early part of the century it turned out a steady stream of trained men for service among the churches. Unfortunately, in the late 1920's, a declining student body and financial reverses led to the decision to close the school and transfer its financial and charter rights and responsibilities to a corporation which would initiate its work at Nashville, Tenn., in cooperation with the School of Religion of Vanderbilt University. So, the Atlanta Theological Seminary Foundation came into being.

Even though the transfer of the Seminary removed it from the center of its service area, churches here and throughout the country have continued to share in its benefits. No small number of our outstanding ministers were helped in their theological preparation by financial grants from the Foundation. Several have stayed in the South to lend their strength to Southern Congregationalism - Carl Dollar, Arnold Slater, David Shepherd, and Lowell Smoot, to name only a few. The churches of our country owe much to the Foundation and the leaders who have been responsible for its functioning. The Foundation receives no financial assistance from the Boards or Departments of the national denomination, and is dependent upon gifts and grants of groups, congregations, and individuals concerned with educating and training students for the ministry in the Congregational Christian Churches.

Because of our present desperate need for more trained ministers and the great advance evidenced

among our churches, the Atlanta Theological Seminary Foundation becomes increasingly important in the total program of our Fellowship. Accordingly, the Board of Directors of the Foundation have been seeking ways to strengthen its position and increase its usefulness to the churches. The Vanderbilt School of Religion administration and faculty have been most cooperative and helpful. At the present time two Congregationalists are on the staff: Dr. Wm. Kendrick Grobel and Dr. Nels Ferre'. The administrative head of the school, Dean John K. Benton, serves as a member of the Board of Directors.

At the last Annual Meeting of the Foundation, the Board of Directors was enlarged to include a majority of the members of the Board of Directors of the Southeast Convention. While continuing to serve the nation as a separate corporation, the Foundation has now become the special concern of the Southeast Convention - its people and its churches. Circular Church, Charleston, S. C., and Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga, Tenn., have long been contributors to this important work and it is hoped that all churches will include the Foundation in their yearly benevolent budgets.

In February, the Executive Committee will be meeting in Nashville to discuss certain changes in the By-Laws of the Foundation and a plan for increasing the effectiveness and support of its work.

The Foundation fills an important place in our educational program and is worthy of our every consideration and wholehearted support.



Officers of Atlanta Seminary Foundation—Left to right: The Rev. Arnold Slater, Chairman Board of Directors; Jules U. Durham, Secretary; Dr. Warren McA. Deacon, Acting President; Walter L. Jackson, Treasurer; and A. R. Rucks, Vice-Chairman.



The Rev. Guy L. Colbert, now attending Vanderbilt School of Religion, under a grant from the Foundation, while continuing to serve Mt. Grove Church in North Alabama.

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About Your Subscription . . .

Some 300 subscriptions to the **Southeast News** expired with the December issue of the magazine. Fifty had already been renewed before we sent out the notices some of you found in your copies last month. The response to the notices has been rather slow, but we realize that most people are busy with Christmas, and we believe the renewals will begin to pour in during January.

A very heartening trend is that many churches sending in renewals for old subscribers have also included several new subscribers! This is a wonderful help toward our goal of 1,000 subscribers. You see, the magazine now cost us, including the cuts, postage, developing films etc., around \$150 each month. We have at present 600 subscribers. For about \$20 more each month we could have another 400 copies printed. The initial cost is the setting of the type, and the cost of the extra 400 would be mainly for the paper. So, if we had 1,000 and a few more subscribers we believe we could break even each year and the magazine would be self-supporting.

Our special thanks to the churches of Andalusia, Demorest, Evarts, West Point, Ft. Valley, Wadley, Phenix City, Columbus, Crestview, Nashville, Tifton, Barnesville, Chipley, Richland, and Baker, Fla., for their cooperative spirit.

Won't you send in your renewal TODAY?

The Staff

Have You Read . . .

"I Walk With Faith" by the Rev. Margaret Blair Johnstone, which appeared in the December and January issues of the WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION?

Mrs. Johnstone is a Congregational Christian minister and is pastor of the Groton, Mass., Congregational Church.

It's a very interesting and inspiring autobiography, and if you find it of value and interest, won't you share it with others?

A Good Record

The **Langdale Church** in Alabama has set something of a record. In the past three years, two of them under the leadership of the Rev. A. Goff Bedford, the church has furnished this area with three ministers.

The Rev. Lynwood Hubbard is now doing an excellent job at Bethel Church in West Point; and the Rev. E. S. Fetner is working diligently at Shawmut Todd Church. Both churches have a building program. The Rev. Howard Morris has been called to serve the Tallassee, Mt. Olive Church.

In addition, two laymen of this church, Winfred Walters and James Dollar, have volunteered for pastoral supply to churches without pastors.

A Good Clean Project for Pilgrim Fellowship

Soap is an immediate need in countries like Greece and Korea where earthquakes and war have created dire health problems. Dr. Herbert H. Stroup estimates that the work of the Congregational Christian Service Committee in Greece alone could use 200,000 bars every month for "what morale builders clean bodies and clean clothes are!"

The Pilgrim Fellowship of North Congregational Church in Berkeley, California have been making soap from waste fats contributed by housewives in the church. Other PF groups are following their example.

If any church group is interested in making soap for people who need it desperately, full information can be obtained from Dr. Earle H. Ballou, 110 East 29th St., New York 16, N. Y.

Vanceville PF Contest

A few months ago, we reported that the Junior Pilgrim Fellowship of the Vanceville Church near Tifton, Ga., had taken as their project the selling of subscriptions to the **SOUTHEAST NEWS**. They receive no money for this—it is their contribution to the larger fellowship.

We have just received another subscription from them, and our faithful correspondent, Mrs. Rosie V. Hand, reports as follows:

"This quarter our Junior PF decided to have a contest and choose sides. They took the names of cars beginning with P and F (Pilgrim Fellowship) "Pontiac" and "Ford", with miles as points starting out on a 1000 mile journey. For each subscription they gained 150 miles. They also sold some Christmas Seals for the TB drive. In addition they received 10 points for flowers of get-well cards to the sick, miles for being present at the meetings, lesson study, learning Bible verses, etc.

"The Pontiacs were just a few miles ahead when one of the Fords got the enclosed subscription. This put them way over the top in two months!"

Our grateful thanks to the Vanceville Junior Pilgrim Fellowship. With young people like these, the Georgia Conference can be sure of inspired leadership in the years to come.

— SUPERINTENDENT'S PAGE —

"Another Year"

For the past several months, I've been carrying two "little black books" in two different pockets. One was for engagements in 1953 and the other was for recording appointments for 1954. Many of you have had to wait until I found the right book which somehow always seemed to be in the wrong pocket. Well, now that confusion is ended for the other day I put my 1953 "Standard Diary" to rest in the drawer on top of all the other "little black books" of other years. But before I did, I couldn't help but thumb through its pages and do a bit of happy reminiscing.

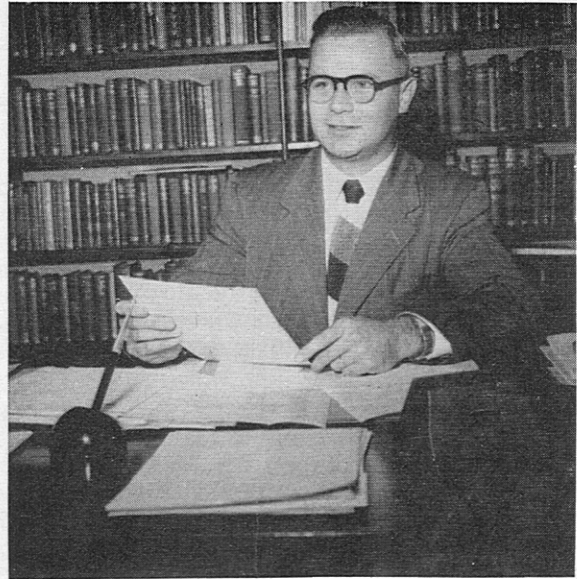
January second found me sitting behind a strange desk, in a strange office, in a strange city, reading over a list of strange churches within a strange area comprising a part of six states. But the strangeness didn't last long. A very efficient Registrar and Assistant Treasurer, Mrs. Albright, gave me a working knowledge of office routine and churches throughout the Convention. Carl Dollar and Loretta Petersen gave me an appreciation of the teamwork of the staff, and visiting ministers as well as Tom Anderson "upstairs" assured me of a friendly welcome. That all seems like such a long, long time ago! And indeed it is - not in terms of days, perhaps, but certainly in terms of experience and fellowship.

During those first days and months it was a constant joy to visit each new congregation and know the warmth of a sincere welcome. It gave me an unending thrill to see the stirrings of a great advance and the challenging possibilities for growth and service. The Board of Directors and the Staff began to plan and work toward strengthening our Convention organization and before long a new Constitution began to take shape.

Then, in May at the Annual Meeting of the Convention in Pilgrim Church, Chattanooga, we passed the first milestone. The new organization was voted into existence. Now we were in possession of a great tool for increasing the effectiveness of our work, for insuring the free and democratic procedures so important in our Congregational Christian polity, and for developing leadership throughout the Convention. Four Committees came into being and began at once with vision and determination to assume the responsibilities within their particular sphere - Ministry and Churches, Survey and Church Aid, Christian Education and Youth Work, and Evangelism, Stewardship and Missionary Education. Throughout the Convention there developed an expectant attitude, an eager participation. "We Would Be Building" was not just a slogan but a divine imperative, and throughout the Convention we began to build.

Through the pages of the *Southeast News* we have shared our experiences and concerns, and all who have read its news items, articles, and editorials from month to month are well aware of the great forward movement at work among all our churches.

As I scanned the pages of 1953, I remembered people, places, churches, and special events which



ERSTON M. BUTTERFIELD

have so greatly enriched my life, and I gave thanks that it has been my good fortune to be part of it all. You remember that I had hoped to visit every church this first year - well, I didn't quite make it. Nearly 40,000 miles of travel enabled me to visit 104 of our churches in every part of the Convention. Maybe the days that are ahead will provide the needed time to achieve the goal.

All that happened in 1953 was due to our united efforts. It takes more than a Superintendent or a Board of Directors, or inspired committees to do the job; it takes the cooperative efforts of every member of every church. We have shared the vision and the task, and we have known the joy of participation in the great Christian Adventure. It's been a wonderful year - and were it not for the promise of even more wonderful things to come during 1954 I'd be sorry to close the drawer on 53's "little black book."

But another year is before us, waiting for our Christian devotion, duty, and service to make 1954 an even greater year in the history of the Southeast Convention than was 1953. So let us say a prayer of thanks for the old year that is gone and a prayer for vision and strength and courage that we may be worthy of the new.

— Erston M. Butterfield

ANOTHER YEAR

Another year of spotless dawns
Amid this world of sin;
Another year of numbered days
To spend in serving Him.
Another year to brighten the path
Where other feet must tread;
Another year to lighten a load
Or lift a bended head.
Another year to search for truth,
And spread the Word abroad;
Another year to live a life
Ever nearer God.

E.M.B., 12/27/40

Laymen's Fellowship Meeting

A thrilling sight it is to see laymen from churches of East Alabama and West Georgia meeting together for fellowship, and building for the future. On November 28, 70 men met at United Church, LaGrange, Ga. for their regular meeting. A bountiful dinner of roast beef with all the trimmings was served by the women of the church.

The meeting was presided over by Odell Yancey. A report of the recent School of Churchmanship was given and the group voted for another school within the year. On recommendation of the Executive Committee it was voted to send the new President or Vice-President of our Fellowship to the Mid-winter Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, and to establish this as a regular activity of our Fellowship.

A rising vote of appreciation was extended to Odell Yancey for his capable leadership the past two years. Much progress has been made during this time—several new clubs have been organized, our first Churchmanship School was held, and a budget of \$250 was met during the last year, a portion of the budget being given to Southern Union College.

Our special guest and speaker for the evening was Supt. Erston M. Butterfield. Listing six points that would make each of us more effective laymen, Supt. Butterfield proceeded to inspire and challenge all present with his message. At the close of his talk the new officers of our Fellowship came to the altar and were installed in their new offices by Supt. Butterfield.

With Rufus Farrar as President and a fine Executive Committee to assist him we look forward to great accomplishments in the months ahead.



New officers of the East Alabama - West Georgia Laymen's Fellowship—Left to right: Tom Crenshaw, Chairman Findings Committee; Rufus Farrar, President; Johnny Seymour, Chairman Membership Committee; Emmett Bailey- Vice-Chairman Program Committee; Paul Penn, Secretary-Treasurer; Lewis Howell, Vice-President; and Herman Cook, Convention President Laymen's Fellowship (seated).

Race Relations Sunday

According to a letter from the Rev. Galen R. Weaver, of the Race Relations Dept. of the A.M.A., **Race Relations Sunday** will be February 14, 1954.

A sample packet of resource materials (prepared by the National Council of Churches) is available on your request to the above department at 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Further helpful material for observing Brotherhood Week (February 21 to 28) may be had by writing to the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. A Congregational Christian minister, the Rev. Allyn Robinson, formerly of Raleigh, N. C., is most directly responsible for developing these materials.

Two filmstrips with recordings would be especially appropriate during February: "Rebirth in Roxbury", an impressively told narrative of an actual situation in Boston, and "The Good Voice and Grandmother River", the story of our Ft. Berthold, N. D. Indian people. They are available free from the Convention office. The 16 mm sound movie, "The High Wall" is a professional grade film that tells a powerful story of prejudice, its roots and effects. It may be rented through the Anti-Defamation League office, 11 Pryor St. S.W., Atlanta. The cost is one dollar.

Truly it is a wonderful sight to see the "growing crusade" of laymen working together for Christ.

—Herman D. Cook

A Song of Cheer

Come, banish that frown from your face;
The planets are whirling through space,
The roses are blowing,
The grasses are growing,
The rivers are rushing to sea;
Shall you and you only stand still?
Arise, go to work with a will!
Don't pause at the foot of the hill
To sigh for what never can be.

Though crossed in some beautiful hope,
Don't sit in the stillness and mope,
With wrongs to be righting,
And foes to be fighting,
Each moment is precious as gold;
The rivers rush on all the day,
The planets whirl 'round on their way,
Be ready and steady as they,
And see what the future will hold.

Mt. Olive Women's Fellowship

The WF Circle of the Mt. Olive Church in Tallahassee, Alabama, is indeed an active group, and judging from accounts of their meetings they are also full of originality.

The topic of their October program was "The Purpose of Our Fellowship", led by Mrs. Roy Culpepper and Mrs. Elmer Jones, and followed by a discussion on the different ways in which the fellowship could help out in community life. After the program Mrs. Powell gave a reading, "Troubles Knocking at Your Door." She was dressed in a full devil's costume and Mrs. Roy Culpepper was also gaily dressed—wearing a comical face. Mrs. Verna McCain and Mrs. Maxie Pienezza were dressed in "gay nineties" costumes and no one could label the attire of Mrs. Dewey Walls, who took the prize.

For the November meeting, family night was observed and the circle named the "Family of the Year". Mr. and Mrs. Leon Gleaton were elected on the following merits: "Faith in God", "Goodness", "Appreciation", and "Kindness". They were presented a beautiful flower arrangement. "The Qualities That Produce a Good Man" was presented by Mrs. Ruby Culpepper. "Family of the Year" presentation was made by Mrs. Nellie Jones.

Refreshments were served to members and their families in the assembly room of the church, beautifully decorated with chrysanthemums given by B. F. Peoples and Mrs. A. J. Maddox.



Mr. and Mrs. Leon Gleaton holding the lovely flowers presented them as "Family of the Year."

**Nothing is More
Easily Misunderstood
Than Humor**

Christian Church Committee

According to the Rev. Warren H. Dennison, newly appointed Chairman of the Special Christian Church Committee of the Congregational Christian Historical Society, this committee is most interested in finding the names and addresses of persons who might have on their shelves, in their closets and attics, books, records, histories, files, bulletins, materials of the Christians and of their writers from their origin 1794 until the Union in 1931.

Five depository libraries have been selected as centers for the work of this committee: Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.; Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio; Elon College, Elon, N. C.; Boston Congregational Library, Boston, Mass.; and the Historical Society Office, New York, N. Y.

Dr. Denison requests that anyone having materials which would be helpful to his committee will please mail this to him at 632 Broad St., Grinnell, Iowa. "We will place all such in the strategic centers listed above, list them in the Historical Society office, etc.

We are purely a voluntary committee to see that our history may be preserved, rather than dissipated and lost. Will you kindly help? Maybe you know someone else who may have such records. Kindly give us name and address. We thank you in advance for promptness and for your donations and constructive help", said Dr. Denison.

Attractive Visitor

A recent visitor to this area was Miss Jennie Doidge of Boston, Mass., and New York City. Miss Doidge was interested in learning about the Southeast and especially the mission points receiving aid from the Missions Council and the A. M. A. After a visit in Atlanta with the Superintendent, the Rev. Erston M. Butterfield, and Dr. Thos. Anderson, pastor of the Central Church, and visits to the Rush Memorial and First Churches in Atlanta, the Atlanta University, Emory University and other points of interest, Miss Doidge visited with the Rev. C. Carl Dollar in Roanoke. Mr. Dollar told her of his work with the Christian Rural Extension Service, and drove her to Wadley, Ala., to see Southern Union College. The Rev. Annie Campbell met Miss Doidge at Wadley, and took her on a tour of churches and colleges, including Cotton Valley School, Thorsby Institute, Talladega, Tuskegee and the Lanett, Mt. Grove and Thorsby churches.

From Birmingham Miss Doidge went on to Fiske University in Nashville and to visit churches in Tennessee and Kentucky, among them the Crossville, First Church.

She has spent the past year traveling abroad visiting in forty different foreign mission fields, going with the thought in mind to answer the question: "Does it make a difference if people are Christians?"

Miss Doidge had saved for 25 years for this trip, and she returned home with the conviction that it DOES make a vast difference when people are Christians.

Church News

The **Pilgrim Church** of Birmingham, Ala., is pleased to report that our first Every Member Canvass, conducted on November 15, was a spectacular success! Under the able leadership of Messrs. George Plosser and John Owen we raised for 1954 pledges approximately \$17,500. We expect to adopt a 1954 budget of around \$20,000. Our 1954 pledges total \$5,000 more than those for 1953. There is no doubt in this church as to the value of an Every Member Canvass.

We received 7 new members into our fellowship recently, raising the total for the year to 16. Nothing spectacular, but a welcome increase. Our Ladies Guild is following the practice of giving each new member family a subscription to **ADVANCE**. These plus our original member subscribers raised our total **ADVANCE** subscriptions to 37.

Our minister had the honor of preaching the sermon at the Annual Thanksgiving Service of the downtown Birmingham churches. He says he has not yet gotten over the thrill of preaching to some 700 people!

We have started a monthly Newsletter called "Pilgrim's Progress" with Mrs. Marie Mayer as Editor. This has met with much approval and we intend to carry on with the project.

In an attempt to publicize the Congregational Christian Church, we have initiated a weekly series of advertisements in one of the local suburban papers. The ads are three column by three inches so nobody can possibly miss them. We hope to continue the ads indefinitely.

* * *

The congregation of the **Fort Valley Society Hill Church** in Georgia has been holding Sunday morning worship services in the homes of our members for the past weeks. Since our old church needed major repairs, it was voted to rebuild from the ground up. The new building is now under roof. The labor is being contributed by the congregation and much of the lumber from the old building is being used in the new. Until work is completed, we will continue to hold services in the various homes.

When Superintendent Butterfield was with us a few weeks ago, he reminded us that the early church grew and prospered with just such a fellowship and in homes of the "Followers." The Rev. A. Woodrow Dorsey continues to serve as pastor and helper.

* * *

The **Bethel Church** of West Point, Ga., is happy to report the reception of 12 new members during November, 11 of whom came on confession of faith and were baptized November 22. We feel that as our membership increases, our fellowship with God and with each other also increases.

We are striving to grow spiritually and to bring others who are not in church into our fellowship. We are also working to complete our building project which we have begun. This consists of additional Sunday School rooms and a parsonage for our pastor, the Rev. Lynwood Hubbard, to be

built immediately after the completion of our church addition.

—Mrs. C. D. Backstrom

* * *

Seman Community Church, Ala., looks forward to a second good year under the leadership of the Rev. Otto Culpepper. There were 13 new members added to the church roll during the summer.

A gas heating system was installed in the church during September.

An election of officers was held during November as follows: Deacons: Herman Cannon, Judson Betts; Trustees: Russell Smith, Melvin Martin, and Robert Betts; Clerk, Roy Butler.

Our Sunday School is making very satisfactory progress under the superintendency of Mr. Judson Betts. It was organized 16 months ago with 21 enrolled, and now has an average attendance of 40 with 52 enrolled. We also have a good attendance at Prayer Service every Friday night.

Mrs. Otis Stearns, reporter

* * *

The **First Congregational Christian Church** of Tifton, Ga., continues to make steady progress under the leadership of the Rev. Ralph Worley, who assumed the pastorate Oct. 4, 1953.

Among the forward steps taken by the church has been the organization of the young people's work. A weekly mid-week prayer service is now held regularly, and 13 new members have been added to the church.

—Mrs. J. T. Gill, reporter

* * *

The W.M.U. of the **Hunt Memorial Church** in Alexander City, Ala., held an election of officers at the last meeting, with the following elected: Mrs. James Cumbee, President; Mrs. Reuben Allen, Vice-President; Mrs. Lenore Alford, Secretary-Treasurer; Mrs. A. C. Pemberton and Mrs. Lynn Blair, Program Chairmen; Mrs. Hershel Smith, Reporter; Mrs. N. A. Riley, Mrs. Pauline Patton, Mrs. Allen Smith, Field Workers; Mrs. Lynn Blair, Mrs. Allen Smith, Mrs. James Cumbee, Friendly Service.

A Christmas program was presented on December 20 with Mrs. James Cumbee and Mrs. Lynn Blair in charge. A play, "The Star in the Sky" in two acts with six scenes was presented.

During the first week in December a revival was held with the pastor, the Rev. M. O. Worley, preaching and Damon Scott in charge of the song service.

A Layman's Fellowship has been organized with C. Alford as President; Mr. Corley as Vice-President; R. Allen and Lynn Blair as Program Chairmen; N. B. Riley as Secretary and Treasurer. The meetings are held each Tuesday night. The men are busy making plans for the coming year, and these will be reported later.

—Mrs. James Cumbee, reporter

* * *

The **Evarts Congregational Christian Church** in Kentucky held union Thanksgiving services with the Evarts Baptist Church at the Baptist church

with the Rev. Collie Seymour preaching the Thanksgiving sermon.

The annual Christmas bazaar held in the church parlor December 4 was most successful. The parcel post sale created quite a sensation and was an addition to the usual sale of aprons, all types of handmade articles, cakes, candies and pies. Packages were received from friends from nearly every state in the union. One member of Circle I, W.M.S. received 35 packages—they were carried into the church in a bushel basket! A lovely quilt made by both groups added to the success of the bazaar. Total amount realized was \$255.

The Nominating Committee of the church met December 7. This committee was composed of the following: Mrs. Connor Linkous, Mrs. W. E. Peirce, Mrs. N. B. Smith, Miss Maude Woodall, Bill Buckner, and Carson Coleman. Officers were nominated to be elected at the Annual Meeting in January.

Circle I, W.M.S. and the Lois Vincent Society were entertained by Mrs. Jack Langley in the playroom of her beautiful and spacious home on December 14. The Christmas motif was carried out in the decorations and refreshments. Mrs. N. B. Smith gave the devotional with Mrs. Collie Seymour, Mrs. W. E. Peirce, Mrs. Charles Scoville taking part. Christmas carols were sung, games played and gifts exchanged.

The traditional Candlelight and Carol Service was held December 20 under the direction of Bill Buckner. White gifts were presented at the Altar, and a silver offering for aged ministers was taken.

The church calendar is very full since the Rev. Seymour arrived. The week of December 6 had business meetings or activities every night except Saturday. The Junior Pilgrim Fellowship has reorganized. The Choir is under the direction of Bill Buckner, with Mrs. Connor Linkous as pianist.

The moving expenses of the Rev. Seymour were paid from the cooking fund by the women of Circle I W.M.S. and the Lois Vincent Society, all women of the church who cook for the Lions Club of Evarts twice each month under the direction of Mrs. J. H. Turner and Mrs. E. L. Vaughn.

—Mrs. N. B. Smith, reporter

* * *

Blackwood Church of Headland, Ala., is on the move! We are glad to report that we have sent in this year's payment of the Church Building Loan Fund.

On November 22 we had a full day of "Thanks and Giving". The Sunday School period was highlighted by a special explanation of the Christian Children Fund by M. E. Rister, and it was followed by an offering for the fund. The eleven o'clock service continued the Thanksgiving theme with the pastor, the Rev. S. M. Penn, using the text "Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me." At the evening service the Young People and Adults of the Sunday School assisted by the Rev. Penn, presented a missionary play. Twenty-five characters gave the play to an audience of about 120. As a part of dedication service an offering

was received for missions. The response to the offering was so generous that the last step in attaining our annual Missionary Apportionment Goal of \$100 was made!

At our Annual Church Meeting on November 19 the following officers were elected for 1954: Deacon, W. L. Rister; Trustee, M. E. Rister; Clerk, Stenetta Greene; Treasurer, Mavis Greene; Benevolent Treasurer, Dora Brackin; Chorister, A. T. Brackin; Pianist, Carolyn Hicks; and S. S. Supt., M. E. Rister.

Our Adult Sunday School class has decided it needs week-day meetings. Although we have after only one discussion and planning session, sponsored a Christmas program. Our main purpose is to deepen our spiritual life and we expect to accomplish this purpose through various interest groups and activities. Besides some projects to care for the grounds, and repairs, our immediate plans call for two classes on the subjects of "Stewardship" and "Bible Study".

We have a fine group of Young People for which the church is very grateful. They not only are active in their group, but are sharing the leadership in the Sunday School and church worship services. In recent years Dora Brackin and the Rev. Penn have been adult advisors of the group, but we are happy to report that Mrs. Shelby Hodges, a consecrated and talented young Methodist friend, has assumed this responsibility. The young people plan very soon to give a Negro minstrel as one of their money-making projects.

It has been the custom all the years of our church life to have a Christmas Day program, and it never fails to attract a large crowd. All age groups are used in the worshipful program. The day is climaxed with a community Christmas tree.

—Dora Brackin

* * *

The **Pleasant Hill Community Church** reports a most successful Every Member Canvass which was made on November 29 under the able leadership of Carl Thompson, chairman of the Church Support Committee. A meeting of the canvassers and members of the Church Cabinet was held at the home of Dr. May Wharton and Miss Alice Adshead Sunday night after the completion of the canvass.

On December 9 the Women's Fellowship held a Christmas Festival of Music, directed by Mrs. O. C. Stewart, Jr., for their regular meeting at the Community House.

The Pilgrim Fellowship, directed by members of the Young Adult group, presented a Christmas Pageant on the night of December 22. As a part of this program, there was a "white Christmas."

On December 13 Miss Marguerite Bicknell, a teacher in a Mission School for Girls near Athens, Greece, was the guest speaker at the morning church services. Her message was warmly received.

—Mrs. A. H. Smith

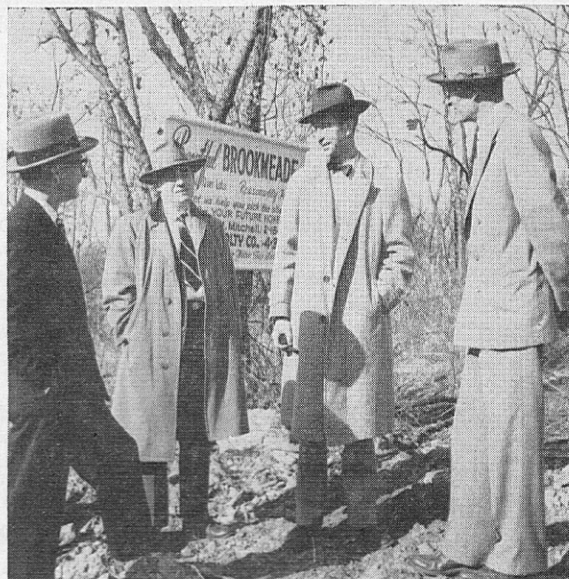
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The **Congregational Christian Church** of Crossville, Tennessee, held its Christmas program on

(Please turn to page 10)



The Rev. Ira D. Black, Director of the City Work Department of the Congregational Christian Churches, who made a flying visit to Atlanta to meet with the Convention Board of Directors and on to Nashville to discuss with interested Nashville Congregational Christians the establishment of a high potential church there.



Dr. Wesley A. Hotchkiss (third from left) who recently visited Nashville to make a survey. Dr. Hotchkiss is Director of the Research Department of the Congregational Christian Churches. His report to the Church Building Department was very favorable as to possibilities of a strong church in the Brookmeade section of Nashville.

Convention Calendar of Activities

- Jan. 3—Universal Week of Prayer
- Jan. 17—Church & Economic Life Week
- Jan. 23-25—Women State Presidents and Superintendents Meeting at Cleveland, Ohio
- Jan. 25-30—Midwinter Meeting in Cleveland
- Jan. 31—Pilgrim Fellowship Sunday and Youth Week
- Feb. 9—Board of Directors' Meeting, Atlanta
- Feb. 14—Race Relations Sunday
- Feb. 21-27—Brotherhood Week
- March 28—ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Church News

(From page 9)

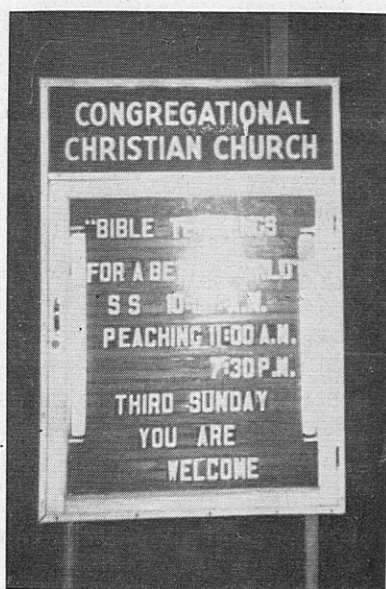
the evening of December 20. The Nativity was enacted in scripture, song, shadow play, with both children and adults taking part. Solos and special numbers by the choir were a part of the program also. For the morning service the choir gave the Second Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel as a choral reading; the anthem, "Glory to God in the Highest" by Pergolaisi, and Mrs. Thomas Conway sang "The Shepherd's Story."

On December 10 we went to Scotland and England, at least the ladies of the Guild did. Miss Miriam Heermans, one of four delegates to the World Church Conference held in St. Andrews, Scotland, took us with her, by eye and ear, to Scotland and England, sharing her amusing, wonderful and inspiring trip.

On December 13 another group journeyed to Greece with Miss Marguerite Bicknell, a member of the faculty of the Orinda Childs Pierce School for Girls in Athens, Greece. She took us on a journey through the entire country of Greece, telling of the work of the school and giving interesting details of living conditions in the entire country. Miss Bicknell also showed many beautiful and interesting pictures of historical interest both past and present.

At the business meeting of the Guild, reports from all standing committees showed much accomplished during the past year. Plans were made for local Friendly Service, aid to church programs, and assistance to the many activities of our minister, the Rev. Abram Nightingale.

—Crossville Chronicle



New church sign of the Richland Congregational Christian Church, Richland, Ga.

A Meditation For The New Year

THE QUEST

By Erston M. Butterfield

Of all the seasons of the year, this is the most holy. With glad hearts and expectant spirits we joined with the shepherds and the wise men in their journey to Bethlehem. And once again we found the King and our hearts were filled with the warmth and love of the Baby Jesus. How blessed it is to celebrate Christmas with songs of praise, joyous greetings and thoughtful remembrances.

And now we are in the beginning of a New Year, and we suddenly realize that our quest of Christmas time does not end at a stable in Bethlehem, but has its beginning at the dawn of each new year for every successive generation. The Quest led us to the King 2000 years ago but still religious men everywhere are in quest of His Kingdom—the beloved community, the good and abundant life, “peace on earth, goodwill among men.”

When those words of the herald angels become a reality, then our quest will be ended—but it is not yet. It awaits a time when security is not measured by atomic bombs, jet aircraft, mobile armies or international security pacts. It must wait until we stop measuring progress in terms of mechanical devices, favorable markets, exploitable resources, protective tariffs, foreign exchange ratios and financial charts. It cannot come so long as success is measured by the amount of money one can accumulate, or the place one lives, or the company one keeps, or one's position in the social register.

Our quest is for a Kingdom that will encompass the world with ties of understanding, love, and brotherhood as evidenced in the mutual concern and the united efforts of all men everywhere to produce the good and abundant life—when to glorify God and to serve one's fellowmen becomes at once the purpose and power of existence. And so we continue our quest in this year of our Lord 1954.

And it will lead us into great adventures and down new avenues of service. That is, if we can but keep our vision clear, our minds determined, and our spirits confident. This year again the newsprint and the airways will be filled with tales of tragedy, uprising, destruction, betrayal and murder. And many who seek, but not too diligently, will become discouraged, disillusioned; and they will cease their quest and call it a useless struggle. Such people give up in defeat because they misplace their efforts and misread their destiny. They persist in applying their Christian principles to social, economic, and political problems far removed from their immediate sphere of influence. Such is the task of the Church and the great prophets of the Kingdom. But for us as individual Christians of lesser faith, it is necessary to put our religious principles to work within a geographical frame of reference that we can under-

stand and control—here and now, our own daily living, our home, our community, our church. Too often we forget that our religion is a very personal thing, and affects our world only as it motivates our thoughts and actions. If our Christian standards cannot change us—our thoughts, our attitudes, our actions—then how can we ever expect it to change the world?

After all the world is made up of people, and the mistakes, tragedies, and shortcomings of the world are but the reflection of the mistakes, tragedies, and shortcomings of people. Again and again Jesus asserted this truth that the good and abundant life begins in the hearts and souls of people; outward conditions may favor it (and that too is the task of the fellowship that is the Church) but only inward desire can create it. He said: “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you”—so our quest begins within ourselves.

And when we are alone with the King, at the beginning of another year, it is good to face honestly and sincerely . . . how far have we come and how far will we go in our Quest of the Kingdom? Of course we'll be quick to recount the forward steps in our personal religious lives. But let's also take time to recall some of the mistakes we've made along the way—harsh words, hasty judgments, haughty selfrighteousness, and unanswered calls for service.

This kind of self-analysis and confession is so good for us and most necessary to religious health. Not that we shall live with our past mistakes, but that we might humbly confess our past errors and know the release and relief that comes with forgiveness, and find new power to continue our Quest in the days which are before us.

In the newness of a life—forgiven and cleansed—each amount of every day will bring a challenge to advance, to put our faith to work, to prove our worthiness, to bear witness to the Way, and to serve our brothers everywhere. Our lives will be more radiant, our steps more sure, and our fellowship more full of power. We will know no discouragement and anticipate no defeat for it is written: “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

What an opportunity is ours to do better in the year ahead! To continue our quest with renewed purpose and power—to search for the Kingdom with the King at our side!

The old year is gone; the new is before us—
“And now life calls us to a quest;
To live, to love, to work, to play;
To serve, to sacrifice, to pray —
Life calls, and it shall have our best!”

Amen.

673 Piedmont Avenue, N. E.
Atlanta, Georgia

W. S. Wood Ordination

Ordination services for William Sanford Wood were held on November 30 at the United Congregational Christian Church of LaGrange, Ga.

Mr. Wood became associate pastor of the church a year ago after being voted a special license to preach by the state conference. The conference unanimously has recommended him for ordination. He has completed a course of study and received 43 new members into the church. Mr. Wood was ordained a deacon in 1946 and has served as chairman of the board of deacons and as church treasurer.

Dr. David W. Shepherd of Chipley, Ga., preached the sermon. The Call to Worship, Examination and Declaration, and Right Hand of Fellowship were given by the Rev. Erston M. Butterfield, Superintendent of the Southeast Convention. The Rev. R. J. Ellerbee, Thomaston, Ga., led the responsive reading and the Rev. Peter Doherty, Columbus, Ga., gave the statement to the people. The Rev. Lowell Smoot gave the charge to the candidate and the Rev. John Pickens, Jr., of LaGrange gave the prayer of ordination.

Following his ordination, the Rev. Wood led the communion service and the Rev. L. C. Fullerton of Columbus gave the closing prayer and benediction.



W. S. WOOD

Obituary

The Rev. J. P. Bean, 70 year old Congregational Christian minister and cabinet maker, died of a heart attack suffered while in his wood shop Thanksgiving day, November 26. He was carving the words "God Is Love" in preparation for a Thanksgiving program.

Mr. Bean served churches for many years and had conducted around 1,000 funerals and preached 4,000 and more sermons. He was serving three churches—Wesley's Chapel, Shady Grove, and Spring Hill.

Funeral services for the Rev. Bean were conducted the afternoon of November 28 from the Wesley's Chapel Church by the Rev. David Craft, assisted by the Rev. John Weathers and the Rev. O. L. Sheets. Burial was in the adjoining cemetery.

Mr. Bean is survived by his wife, Mrs. Sallie Bean; three daughters: Mrs. Mavis Webster of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Mrs. Lorene Polard of Jamestown, N. Y., and Mrs. Imogene Reynolds of Lineville; two sons: Rev. Zenas Bean of Chester, Pa., and Julius Bean of Wedowee, Ala.; seven sisters; one brother and eleven grandchildren.



REV. J. P. BEAN